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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Mammalia, Rodentia, Cricetidae, *Tapecomys primus* Anderson and Yates, 2000: New locality record

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Tapecomys primus Anderson & Yates, 2000 is a species of rodent recorded only in the Yungas forests of Argentina and Bolivia. The original description was based on two specimens, an adult and a juvenile, from one locality in southern Bolivia (Tapecua, 1500 m, 21°26' S, 63°55' W, Department of Tarija). The second record for the species and first mention for Argentina was published recently by Barquez et al. (2006), based on a young specimen collected at "*Finca Las Capillas, cercanías de Arroyo Los Matos y Ruta Provincial 20*, 1200 m, 24°04' S, 65°08' O, Jujuy Province". This rare genus was known until now, from these two localities and three specimens.

Here, we report a new record for the species in Argentina, also from Jujuy Province. The new locality is *Ruta 83, camino a Valle Grande, 9 km al N de San Francisco*, 1200 m, 23°35' S, 64°58' O, Valle Grande Department (Figure 1). This locality is placed within the phytogeograpical Province of the Yungas (Cabrera 1976; Burkart et al. 1999), as the previous two records. The vegetation corresponds to the Lower Montane Forests, which represent the lowest-elevation forests of the Yungas still in existence. It is dominated by species of Myrtaceous trees, as myrtle (*Eugenia uniflora*), horco molle (*Blepharocalyx salicifolius*), guilli (*Eugenia pseudo-mato*) and mato (*Myrcianthes pungens*); where the high humidity of the environment generates the proliferation of epiphytes as mosses, ferns, bromeliads, and orchids that covers the trunks and branches of the trees (Figure 2).

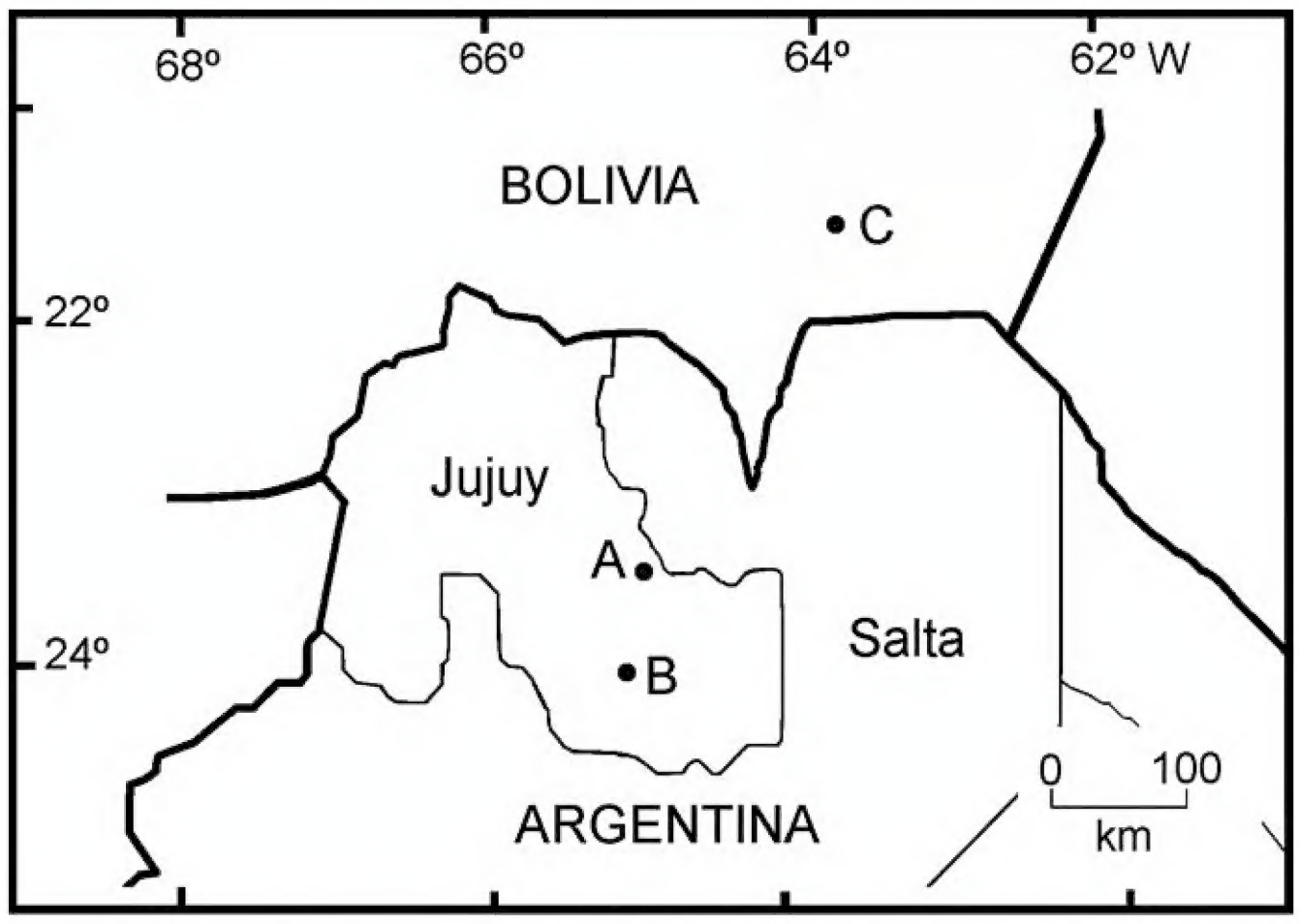

Figure 1. Map of Argentina and Bolivia showing the distribution of *Tapecomys primus*. Argentina: A. *Ruta 83, camino a Valle Grande, 9 km al N de San Francisco* (this study). B. *Finca las Capillas, cercanías de Arroyo Los Matos y Ruta Provincial 20* (Barquez et al 2006). Bolivia: C. Tapecua (Type locality, Anderson and Yates 2000).

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Figure 2. Myrtaceous forests, habitat of the collecting locality of the CML 7556, *Tapecomys primus*.

However, in August when the specimen was captured, the area was dry due to the lack of precipitations and many fallen leaves had accumulated on the ground; nevertheless, the specimen was collected in a quite humid ravine, in a Sherman trap baited with oats.

The specimen was prepared as skin and skull and deposited in the Mammals Collection of the University of Tucumán (*Colección Mamíferos Lillo*: CML), Argentina. The specimen, an adult male with abdominal testes (CML 7556), was collected on 19th August 1996. The external and cranial morphology corresponds with the diagnosis of *Tapecomys primus*, and measurements are similar to those of the holotype: total length, 275 mm (tip of tail cut); length of ear, 26 mm; hindfoot length, 34 mm. The dorsum is brownish-agouti, darker along the middle of the back. Unlike the description given by Anderson and Yates (2000), our individual have an ocraceous line that runs from the sides of the head back to the rump; the venter is grayish with a small pectoral buffy streak. The feet are white and the claws are covered by white hair tufts; hind feet with dark dorsal hairs near the base of the toes; tail strongly bicolor, dorsally drab and white ventrally (Figure 3). The skull is long and robust, interorbital region with sharp edges, posteriorly divergent, slightly beaded, and continuing across the parietal in temporal ridges; zygomatic plate slightly concave and without a spinous process; the anterior border of mesopterygoid fossa placed at the level of the posterior border of the M3. The molars are hypsodont and prismatic, the tooth row somewhat parallel; unlike the holotype the M1 has four roots instead of five (Figure 4).

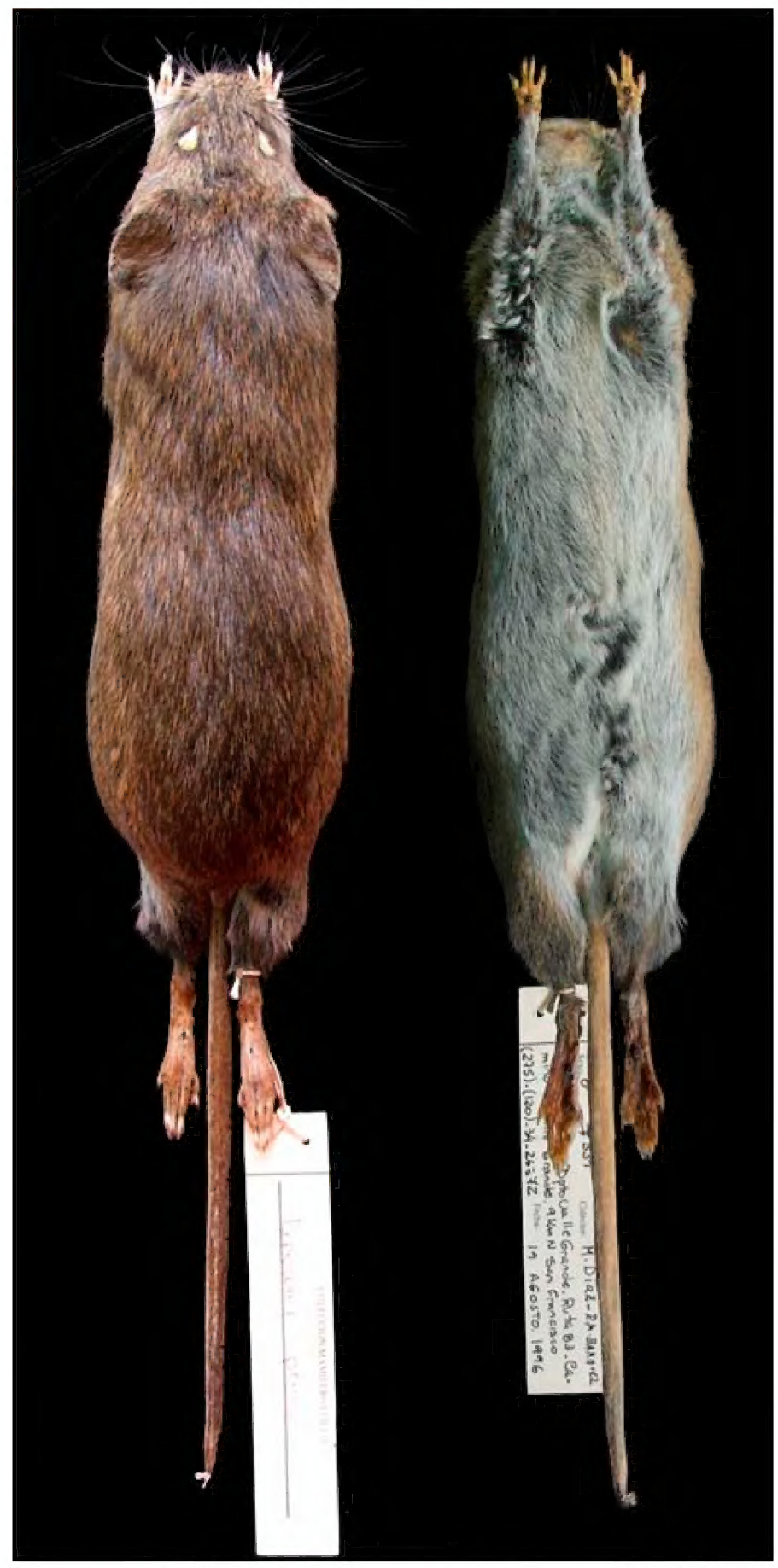

Figure 3. Dorsal and ventral views of skin of *Tapecomys primus* (CML 7556).

Remarkably, when the specimen was first collected we thought that it was a member of the genus *Rhipidomys* due to the presence of dark spots on the top of the hind feet (more evident in the live specimen), a character later diagnostic for the genus *Tapecomys*. Because little comparative material was available to use at the time and the

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genus *Tapecomys* had not been yet described, we presumed it was a subspecific form or a population variant of *Graomys domorum* and that is how it was later cited (Díaz and Barquez 2007). Clearly, our field identification was misled by skull, teeth and external morphological similarities between *Tapecomys* and *Graomys*. The specimen was recently re-identified as *Tapecomys primus* during curatorial work and in the midst of a re-organization of the CML.

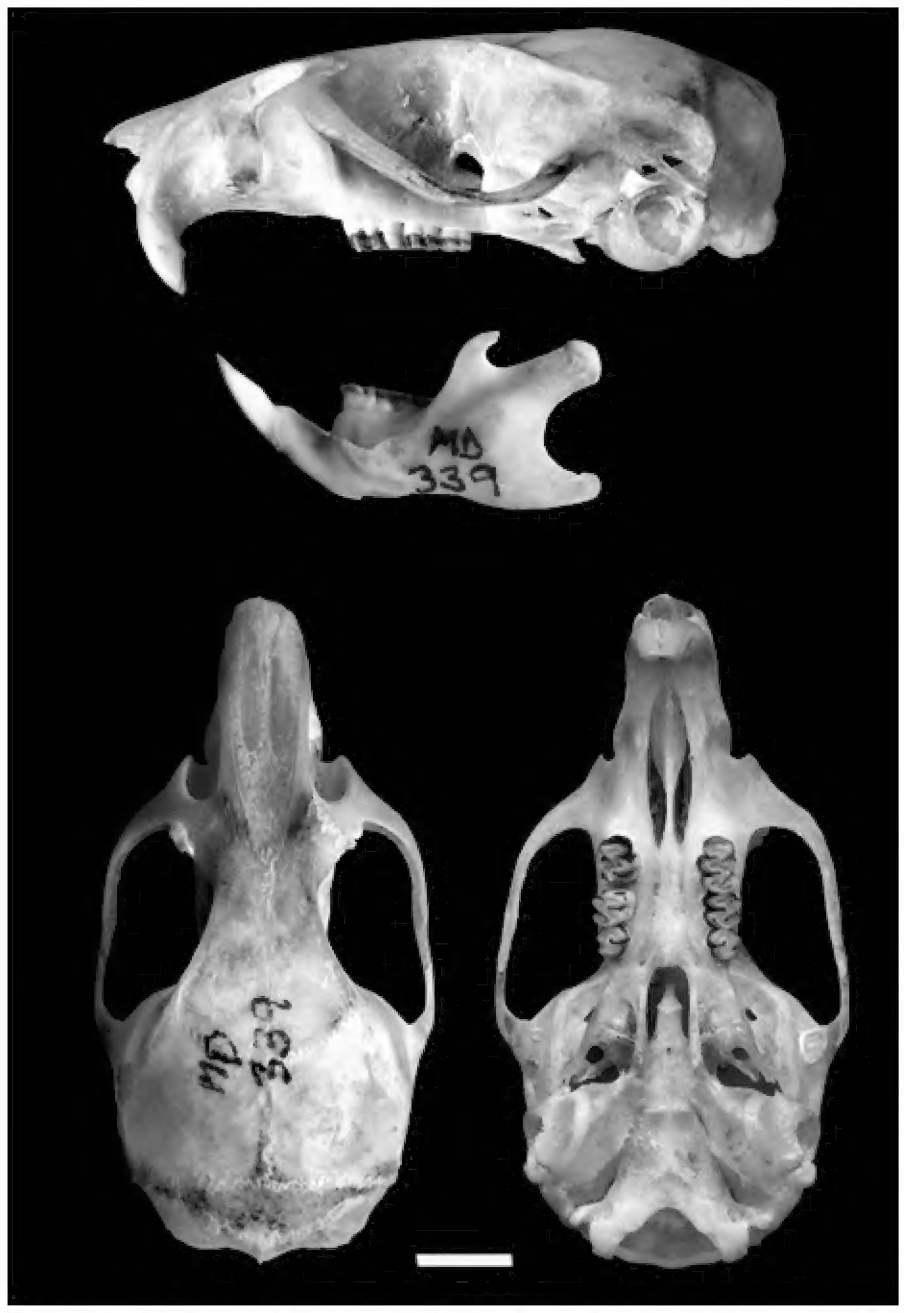

Figure 4. Lateral view of skull and mandible, dorsal and ventral view of skull of *Tapecomys primus* (CML 7556). Scale: 5 mm.

It is important to note that this is an evidently rare species, which has not been collected in Argentina before 1996, in spite of intense mammalian surveys developed in the northwest since 1972 (Olrog 1976; Díaz and Barquez 2007). Only three localities are thus far known for the distribution of this species, one in Bolivia and two in Argentina. Ours is the fourth specimen known to science, and the second adult specimen for this new genus and species.

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